Table 21: Summary of Environmental Consequences

TOPICS	ALTERNATIVE 1	ALTERNATIVE 2
Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice Mandatory Topics: *socially or economically disadvantaged populations* *public health and safety*	▪ Growth would eventually create pressure to convert agricultural land in eastern end of the study area to rural residential development in the long term. This could result in adverse impacts on the eastern end of the study area, which could involve adjusting the western Urban Rural Boundary Line to accommodate additional housing units. ▪ Restrictions on development and rising land values would continue to negatively impact the supply of affordable housing in the near-term which could adversely impact disadvantaged populations. ▪ The tourism sector would continue to grow based on historical patterns. ▪ Scattered residential development under existing zoning densities could affect emergency service response time resulting in adverse impacts on public health and safety. ▪ Traffic volumes would increase on the roadways and highways due to population and housing growth outside the study area. The portion of traffic increases that are attributable to activities in the study area is expected to be minimal.	▪ Programs and tools proposed under Alternative 2 could retain more open space, with indirect adverse impacts on affordable housing. As in Alternative 1, low-income and minority populations could be particularly impacted. ▪ The creation of additional recreational opportunities provided by an open space district or state land conservancy could attract new visitors to the area, creating modest increases in jobs. ▪ Additional funding for agricultural protection measures such as easement programs could provide more opportunities to ensure the continuation of farming- and ranching-related employment. ▪ Alternative 2 would add a negligible increment to traffic volumes and congestion expected in Alternative 1, with no change in projected levels of service.
Land Use Mandatory Topics: *prime and unique farmland*	▪ County zoning, regulations, and tax incentives, would continue to provide major beneficial protection of agricultural land within the study area in the near term. ▪ It is likely in the long-term that some land would be converted to residential or other allowed uses such as golf courses in the long term. This would have a moderate adverse impact on agricultural land (prime and unique as well as grazing). ▪ Indirect impacts from future rising land values and population growth pressures may result in additional pressure to develop land in areas that are not threatened by development in the near term. Over time direct and indirect adverse impacts on agricultural land could be moderate. ▪ Easements would continue to provide a minor to moderate beneficial impact on agricultural land given that funding sources are limited and land values are exceptionally high.	▪ If the local community were to adopt any of the suggested funding options and growth management actions, then the study area would experience moderate beneficial impacts as more agricultural land (both prime and unique farmland and grazing land) could be protected in the long-term as compared to Alternative 1. ▪ Direct and indirect adverse impacts from development would be reduced as there would be more resources to protect land faced with development pressures.
Biological Resources Mandatory Topics: *threatened and endangered plants and animals and their habitats* *wetlands and floodplains* *ecologically critical areas, or other unique natural resources*	▪ Direct and Indirect adverse impacts to threatened and endangered species and their habitat on private lands may occur as a result of agricultural activities or residential and commercial development and their associated infrastructure. Such development could result in fragmentation of habitat and introduction of invasive species if non-native plants are introduced to developed areas. ▪ Activities associated with federal agency missions such as recreation, silviculture, or military activities	▪ Additional land conservation programs and restoration activities with an emphasis on ecosystem management and habitat restoration would have, long-term, direct beneficial impact on biological resources. ▪ Direct adverse impacts on biological resources from low-intensity, limited recreation and access, would be negligible. If high intensity recreation,

Summary of Environmental Consequences		
TOPICS	**ALTERNATIVE 1**	**ALTERNATIVE 2**
	would have a negligible to major adverse impact depending on the activity and its relationship to sensitive species. ▪ Restoration and habitat management activities on public lands and landowner stewardship activities would continue to have long-term positive benefits.	was the main focus of additional open space protection, then direct adverse impacts would range from negligible to major depending on location of facilities and trails in proximity to wetlands, threatened and endangered species and other sensitive habitats. ▪ Use of siting, design, monitoring, educational programs, and adaptive management strategies could mitigate impacts from recreational activities. ▪ Establishment of marine protected areas would have an overall beneficial impact on threatened and endangered species that rely on marine wetlands such as reefs and kelp beds, as well as rocky intertidal zones. ▪ Greater use and application of existing funding programs would have a moderate beneficial impact.
Cultural Resources Mandatory Topics: *important scientific, archeological, and other cultural resources, including properties listed or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)* *urban quality, historic and cultural resources, and design of the built environment* *sacred sites*	▪ Historic structures, archeological sites and historic ranching landscapes located on private land would continue to receive some positive benefit from agricultural preservation through zoning, easements, Williamson Act contracts, and landowner stewardship. ▪ Development of land could cause direct adverse impacts on cultural and archeological resources through degradation or total loss of resources in the long-term. ▪ Some cultural resources on private property, including archeological sites, historic adobe buildings and ranch structures, could receive moderate negative impacts from trampling and natural deterioration from lack of maintenance. ▪ Public land management would continue to have a long-term beneficial impact on the protection of cultural resources. ▪ Some cultural resources on public lands would receive direct adverse impacts from vandalism and poaching of artifacts. ▪ Chumash organizations would continue to protect cultural and sacred sites resulting in direct beneficial impacts. Chumash organizations would continue to lack sufficient access to cultural and sacred sites on private land.	▪ Establishment of the proposed Conception State Marine Park and Refugio State Marine Park concepts would result in beneficial impacts on marine-related cultural artifacts such as shipwrecks. ▪ Additional land use tools could provide additional long-term indirect beneficial impacts on cultural resources by controlling development that could occur under Alternative 1. ▪ Cultural resources would receive minor beneficial impacts from interpretive sites in recreational areas. This could result in increased public knowledge and change in behavior to encourage protection of resources. ▪ As in Alternative 1, public land management of cultural resources would continue to have long-term beneficial impacts. ▪ Depending on the intensity and location, increased recreational use may cause adverse impacts on cultural resources. ▪ Allowing Chumash groups to access and protect cultural and sacred sites at Point Conception would result in beneficial impacts by helping to meet their cultural and religious needs.

Summary of Environmental Consequences		
TOPICS	**ALTERNATIVE 1**	**ALTERNATIVE 2**
Recreational Use and Experience Mandatory Topics: *none identified*	▪ There would be a minor increase expected in the overall supply of recreational opportunities in the study area. ▪ Population growth in the region would substantially increase the potential demand for recreational opportunities in the study area. ▪ A growing imbalance between recreation supply and demand would have some effect on the quality of experience. As recreation sites are more often crowded and management staff capabilities are stretched, the quality of the recreational experience may be expected to decline. ▪ Future recreational opportunities in the study area would continue to be limited by private property concerns, increasing land values, and limited funding for additional recreational areas. ▪ Existing partnerships and funding programs would continue to have a negligible to moderate beneficial impact on recreation in the study area.	▪ Adverse impacts on recreation in the study area would be somewhat reduced in comparison to Alternative 1 as funding sources and stronger priorities for recreation would enhance recreation and meet the long-term recreation needs of the local community and southern and central California region. ▪ Potential increases in recreational opportunities would mean fewer days of over-capacity use thereby increasing the quality of recreational use and experience in the study area.
Scenic Resources Mandatory Topics: *urban quality, historic and cultural resources, and design of the built environment*	▪ In the near term, the area's scenic qualities would remain relatively high. ▪ Some minor negative impacts to the quality of scenic resources within the study area would result from current development proposals and projects. ▪ In the long-term, increasing pressure for urbanization near the rural urban limit line and development of rural residential estates under existing zoning could result in cumulative adverse impacts on scenic resources and public opportunities to access scenic resources.	▪ Protection of additional open space could reduce the adverse impacts of development on scenic resources in the long-term compared to Alternative 1. ▪ Acquisition of additional recreational areas and construction of new trails would provide more opportunities for public access to scenic resources.
Water Mandatory Topics: *public health and safety*	▪ Water quality at beach areas would continue to be a public health and safety concern. ▪ With the exception of Vandenberg AFB, lack of coordinated watershed management programs to address water pollution within the study area would result in cumulative adverse impacts on water quality.	▪ Protection of open space and restricting development could have a long-term beneficial impact on water quality and supply in the study area relative to Alternative 1. ▪ Adverse impacts on water quality should be somewhat reduced in comparison to Alternative 1. Watershed planning could help reduce long-term adverse impacts on the water quality, which would have an indirect beneficial impact on public health and safety at study area beaches.
Air Mandatory Topics: *Public health and safety*	▪ Most increases in emissions by 2015 will result from sources outside of the study area and Santa Barbara County. ▪ Without detailed projections and study of the impacts from build-out or an increase in the jobs/housing imbalance to the year 2030, it is not possible to determine the extent of the impact on air quality.	▪ Actions under Alternative 2 are unlikely to have additional impacts relative to those expected under Alternative 1.

Summary of Environmental Consequences		
TOPICS	**ALTERNATIVE 1**	**ALTERNATIVE 2**
CUMULATIVE IMPACTS	▪ Impacts under Alternative 1 identified for population, housing, employment, and traffic are expected to have an adverse cumulative effect on the respective resources. Over time future development could cause fragmentation of sensitive habitat, agricultural land conversion, and adverse impacts on scenic resources. ▪ With the exception of Vandenberg AFB, lack of coordinated watershed management programs to address water pollution within the study area could result in cumulative adverse impacts on water quality.	▪ Emphasis on ecosystem management and habitat restoration would have a long-term, direct beneficial impact on biological resources. ▪ Actions that limit development in the study area would stop cumulative adverse impacts from land development such as conversion of agricultural land and fragmentation of habitat.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions section compares and summarizes the environmental impacts of Alternatives 1 and 2. The comparison of impacts associated with each alternative includes an assessment of: 1) sustainability and long-term management issues required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and NPS policies, 2) the NEPA criteria for the "environmentally preferred" alternative, and finally, 3) a comparison of potential beneficial and adverse impacts of the alternatives based on the goals established for all alternatives in Part 1.

Sustainability and Long-term Management

NEPA requires consideration of the long-term impact and effect of each alternative on future options. The NPS applies principles of sustainability to determine the long-term impact of management options or alternatives. Sustainable development is defined as "that which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs." The discussion of sustainability and long-term management includes conclusions on short-term environmental use versus long-term productivity, any irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources, and adverse impacts that cannot be fully mitigated or avoided.

- **The relationship between local short-term uses of the environment and maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity.** The primary impacts, both beneficial and adverse associated with Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 would occur in the long-term. Alternative 1 will provide near term protection of resources through current conservation programs, however population and growth pressures along with rising land values may ultimately result in loss of significant scenic, biological, cultural, and agricultural resources if land is developed in the long term. Alternative 2 would provide more opportunities to permanently protect significant resources and manage ecosystems. Entities such as open space districts and land conservancies can develop systematic plans to protect land in a way that benefits specific significant resources or larger ecosystems. Coordinated watershed management would also apply an ecosystem approach to resource management throughout the study area.

- **Irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources that would be involved if the alternative were implemented.** If growth pressures result in the development of land in the eastern portion of the study area under Alternative 1, irreversible and irretrievable impacts may result from cumulative impacts on agricultural, scenic, biological and cultural resources. The agricultural industry may lose viability in the long-term if land values continue to increase resulting in the conversion of agricultural land to other uses. Coastal scenery could be permanently impacted by future development and associated infrastructure such as roads in the long term. Destruction of cultural and archeological resources would result in a permanent loss of their potential contributions to scientific understanding. Land uses such as golf courses would permanently alter scenic resources and the cultural ranching landscape. Loss or fragmentation of habitat could cause permanent adverse impacts on biological

species. Alternative 2 would provide more opportunities to permanently protect significant resources from irreversible and irretrievable commitments in the long term through new funding and conservation programs.

- **Unavoidable Adverse Impacts.** This analysis assesses the impacts of management policies. Because no specific action or alteration of resources is suggested under either alternative, it is not possible to identify specific unavoidable adverse impacts.

Environmentally Preferred Alternative

The "environmentally preferred" alternative is the one that best protects, preserves and enhances historic, cultural and natural resources, and that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment. The environmentally preferred alternative is not the same as the agency or NPS "preferred" alternative. The NPS has not identified a preferred alternative because the actions identified in each alternative are local, state and private actions, not NPS actions. The NPS will identify a preferred alternative in the final EA after analyzing public and agency responses to the draft alternatives.

The environmentally preferred alternative must meet the criteria spelled out in NEPA, section 101(b). Alternatives 1 and 2 both provide opportunities to meet NEPA requirements to protect the environment for succeeding generations. However, under Alternative 1, population and growth pressures with limited funding available for conservation may result in long-term impacts to resources that represent important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage. Further, without an ecosystem management approach, development in the long term could result in habitat fragmentation and an eventual degradation of the study area's species diversity. Alternative 2 provides additional opportunities for long-term sustainable management, locally-initiated environmental stewardship, and conservation of nationally significant resources. Alternative 2 is identified as the environmentally preferred alternative because, if pursued, it could better meet all of the criteria outlined in NEPA, Section 101(b).

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Section 101(b)

It is the continuing responsibility of the Federal Government to use all practicable means...to improve and coordinate Federal plans, functions, programs, and resources to the end that the Nation may -

- Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations;
- Assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings;
- Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk to health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences;
- Preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage, and maintain, wherever possible, an environment which supports diversity, and variety of individual choice;
- Achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities; and
- Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources. (National Environmental Policy Act, Sec. 101(b), [42 USC §4331])

Goals of the Alternatives

The following section compares the potential beneficial and adverse impacts of the alternatives based on the goals established for all alternatives in the Feasibility Study. The goals were developed by the study team based on the public input received. They represent values that appeared to be shared by the majority of the respondents in the various public input opportunities throughout the study process.

Protect significant natural and cultural resources. Under Alternative 1, significant natural and cultural resources would continue to receive their current level of protection and management. In the near term, existing laws and regulations would continue to protect natural resources from degradation on a project by project basis. Habitat enhancement and restoration efforts to protect specific species or ecosystems other than those by large public land managers would be individual without coordination. In the long term, increased pressure from population growth and rising land values near the Urban

Rural Boundary Line could result in additional development which could have a cumulative, long-term impact on significant natural resources. Alternative 2 could provide more opportunities for protecting natural resources through new funding programs, establishment of marine protected areas, and a coordinated watershed management effort for the south coast watersheds.

Under Alternative 1, significant archeological sites and historical resources on private land will likely be surveyed only when development projects are proposed or implemented. Development projects that are implemented will likely disturb, damage, or destroy these resources. Once destroyed, archeological sites and their potential contribution to scientific understanding cannot be replaced. Cultural sites and structures that are not already protected will likely continue to experience natural deterioration or may be destroyed. Conversion of ranch lands to more profitable land use could degrade the historic cultural landscape. Alternative 2 could provide more opportunities to preserve land in open space, thereby protecting the cultural landscape and preventing the disturbance of archeological and historical sites.

Protect scenic resources. Alternatives 1 and 2 would both protect scenic resources to some degree. Under Alternative 1, impacts on scenic resources would be addressed at the local level during planning review by the County and the California Coastal Commission Conversion of agricultural land to residential use under Alternative 1 would limit opportunities to secure better access to scenic resources and could over time have a cumulative adverse impact on scenic coastal resources. Implementation of Alternative 2 would offer more funding opportunities to permanently protect open space providing more opportunities for coastal access and protection of scenic resources.

Maintain the viability of farms and ranches. Under Alternative 1, rising agricultural land values and limited funding to protect agricultural land valued at high prices would likely lead to the conversion of agricultural land to other uses. Alternative 2 would increase opportunities for keeping agricultural land in production by providing more funding sources for agricultural easements.

Continue local control and private land stewardship. Alternative 1 and 2 would both be implemented through local control and private land stewardship. Under Alternative, 2 new agencies that could assist with protecting resource lands could be established. The proposed funding programs would assist ongoing private land stewardship efforts. For example, an open space district can emphasize agricultural viability by providing more funding for easements or increase opportunities for recreation depending on the priorities set during its establishment. State land conservancies and open space districts are commonly run in partnership with local governments and land trusts.

Increase the capability and funding for protection of significant resources, agricultural lands, and opportunities for public enjoyment. Alternative 1 assumes that funding levels for protecting significant resources would remain constant or decrease if current economic conditions continue to impact programs. However, Alternative 2 offers several recommendations for increasing the capability and funding for protection of significant resources, agricultural lands, and opportunities for public enjoyment. As described in the environmental assessment, successful implementation of funding and open space programs recommended under Alternative 2 could result in thousands of acres of land that are permanently protected and increase opportunities for public enjoyment in the long-term.

Reduce conflict between public access and private lands. Conflicts between public access and private lands can be reduced through education and by providing increased recreational opportunities for the public that are sensitively sited and designed. No additional efforts to reduce such conflicts are expected under Alternative 1. Entities such as an open space district, recommended in Alternative 2, could provide more resources towards increasing recreational opportunities when land becomes available, as well as monitoring access near private lands and educating trail users in an effort to reduce conflicts.

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